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ABSTRACT

The 12 items in this annotated bibliography are entries in the ERIC system concerning school crime and how to improve school security. The articles and documents focus on a number of issues, including (1) how to reduce vandalism, (2) the principal's role in school crime management, (3) factors correlated with disruption in schools, (4) the prevention of crime and strategies for dealing with it, (5) sound detection systems, (6) results of studies on violence and school vandalism, (7) security devices (especially locks), (8) methods for identifying and analyzing school crime problems, (9) a method for preventing crime by addressing the factors motivating adolescents to commit crimes, (10) the selection of a security alarm system, (11) the essential aspects of developing a basic security program, and (12) a unique program to discourage vandalism by turning off all lights after closing hours. (JM)

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THE BEST OF ERIC

ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Number 57, February 1981

The Best of ERIC presents annotations of ERIC literature on important topics in educational management.

The selections are intended to give educators easy access to the most significant and useful information available from ERIC. Because of space limitations, the items listed should be viewed as representative, rather than exhaustive, of literature meeting those criteria.

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management

School Security

1 **Bayh, Birch.** "Battered Schools: Violence and Vandalism in Public Education." *Viewpoints in Teaching and Learning*, 55, 2 (Spring 1979), pp. 1-17. EJ 211 747.

Only a decade ago, violence and vandalism in schools were considered troublesome yet relatively minor problems. Today, states Bayh, the former chairman of the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, violence and vandalism are issues of urgent concern to educators, parents, and students alike. In this article, Bayh reviews recent reports on the financial and social costs of violence and vandalism, including three extensive 1975 subcommittee reports. He also describes various programs and strategies that have proved useful in reducing violence and vandalism in public schools.

For example, says Bayh, there is evidence that a well-planned community education program can reduce violence and vandalism. Community education programs open schools to people at night and on weekends, when most vandalism occurs. Besides deterring vandalism by occupying school buildings, community school programs may "help to reduce violence by providing schools with a more positive and active role in community affairs and the solution of student problems."

Another important strategy for reducing school crime is to involve teachers, parents, and especially students in the formulation of a code of rights and responsibilities. A 1975 study found that student involvement in policy- and decision-making processes often increased student commitment to the school and reduced incidents of student crime.

Codes will vary from place to place, but all should contain three main elements: a section outlining the constitutional rights of educational community members; a section delineating the ordinary operating procedures of the school; and a section explaining the various punishments that might be imposed for violations. It is important, says Bayh, that the code use ordinary, clear language and avoid legal jargon.

2 **Ciminillo, Lewis M.** "Principal Roles and School Crime Management." *NASSP Bulletin*, 64, 433 (February 1980), pp. 81-90. EJ 215 997.

One of the principal's most important duties is providing a safe and ordered environment in which learning can take place. But maintaining a secure school is becoming more and more difficult, particularly in urban areas, where school crime is increasing at an alarming rate. To deal effectively with school crime, says Ciminillo, the principal must learn to function as "part sociologist, part security technologist, part human relations expert, and part curriculum innovator."

As sociologist, the principal must understand the reasons behind adolescent crime, particularly in regard to youth gangs. These gangs and similar subcultures, says Ciminillo, "may be attractive to alienated youngsters because they provide structure and meaning in their lives. They flourish largely because of the failure of other institutions."

To counter the appeal of gang membership, principals should provide youth services that "reduce the need to seek security in gang affiliation." Such services might include increased access to the school's recreational facilities, more use of guidance personnel and outreach programs, and peer-group sessions for high school students.

As curriculum innovator, the principal should emphasize vocational education for alienated students, who are looking for a societal structure to be a part of. "Education must open a direct route to a place in society" for these students, states Ciminillo.

Alternative academic programs and alternatives to suspension and expulsions should also be emphasized, for "there are some students who cannot work within the regular curriculum and must be provided with a structure that enables them to progress." Although there may be an immediate need to improve the school's physical security system, Ciminillo concludes, the principal should also attempt to prevent crime by finding alternatives that dissident students can accept.

3 **Gottfredson, Gary D.,** and **Daiger, Denise C.** *Disruption in Six Hundred Schools.* Baltimore: Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, 1979. 262 pages. ED 183 701.

The report of the congressionally mandated Safe School Study (SSS) of 1977 remains the best source of information about school disruption, according to Gottfredson and Daiger. Nevertheless, the report's hundreds of crosstabulations "provide only a weak basis for policy recommendations in which one could have confidence."

In this research report, Gottfredson and Daiger point out several statistical and analytical limitations of the SSS and reanalyze much of the raw data generated by that study. The final chapter distills the study's results and explains "in direct language" what the authors believe are the major implications of the research on school disruption to date.

School size, the number of different students taught by the typical teacher, and the extent to which teachers are provided with materials and equipment they need to teach are implicated as

EA 013 309

factors predicting school disruption. Small schools, especially at the junior high level, have fewer problems with teacher victimization. Senior high schools that do not rotate students among so many different teachers also have less teacher victimization, possibly because this practice reduces the impersonal nature of the school.

Schools characterized by a high degree of cooperation between teachers and administrators also experience less disruption, as do schools run in a "clear, explicit, and firm" manner. "When students report that rule enforcement is firm and clear," state the authors, "their schools experience less disruption." There is scant evidence, however, "that student participation in the generation of these rules is a necessary ingredient." The authors also discuss community factors as they are related to school disruption. Included are an extensive bibliography, numerous data analyses, and four appendixes containing the original SSS questionnaires.

4 **Grealy, Joseph I.** *School Crime and Violence: Problems and Solutions.* Fort Lauderdale, Florida: Institute for Safe Schools, 1979. 358 pages. ED 182 864.

In 1975, the total financial cost of vandalism, burglary, theft, and arson in the public schools was close to $600 million, a sum greater than the cost of all the textbooks used in the nation's 16,000 school districts. This increase in school crime is "merely a reflection of the national crime picture," states Grealy, a former FBI agent and the founder of the National Association of School Security Directors. To drive his statistics home, Grealy recounts numerous recent cases of murder, assault, vandalism, arson, bombing, and theft that have taken place in schools all over the nation.

Grealy recounts his experiences in the Broward County (Florida) School District, where he was hired in 1970 to maintain security during the integration of this large district. He outlines the structure and operations of the security department at Broward and includes job descriptions, security and incident report forms, and case histories of some incidents.

In separate chapters, Grealy addresses the safety and security of people and the safety and security of facilities and equipment. Preventing criminal incidents is an essential element of any security system, but administrators should also set up strategies to deal with crimes if they do occur. Grealy provides in these chapters a wealth of nuts-and-bolts details to help districts protect both people and property.

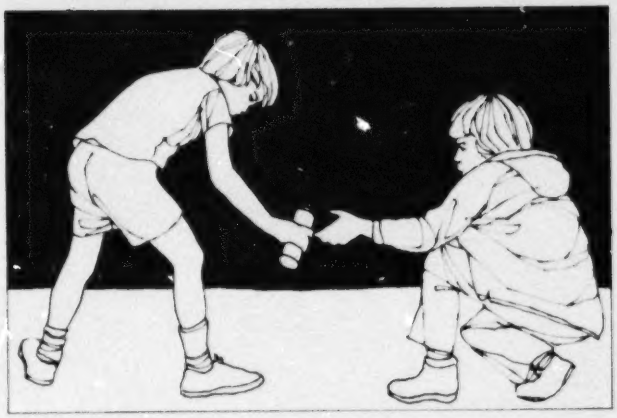
Another chapter discusses some local, state, and federal responses to the school crime problem. Florida's 1973 "Safe Schools Act" and 1976 "Discipline Law" are detailed, as is the federal "Juvenile Delinquency in the Schools Act of 1977." Grealy also discusses Broward's participation in the "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" project. A final chapter discusses the relationship of the school to the juvenile justice system.

5 **Jacobs, E. F.** "Here's How Memphis Cut Vandalism Costs in Half." *Executive Educator,* 2, 1 (January 1980), p. 28. EJ 214 257.

In the past three years, the Memphis public school system has cut its burglary, arson, and vandalism costs in half using a sound-detection security system, states Jacobs, the director of security for the district. Every one of the system's 170 schools contains one or more "sound-detection" units, each of which consists of from ten to fifteen sound-activated microphones.

Whenever a microphone picks up an "impact sound," such as a footstep or breaking glass, all microphones in the area are activated. The sounds are transmitted via telephone cables to a central command station, where a security employee evaluates the noises and signals the police if the noises sound suspicious. The noises are also recorded automatically.

Vandalism costs have been reduced dramatically with the new system, from nearly $600,000 per year to under $300,000. Glass



breakage alone has dropped 80 percent.

The system has several additional benefits as well. Possible flooding was prevented when the microphones picked up the sound of running water from ruptured pipes. Fires have been detected before burning out of control. And pilfering has been reduced, because the system can be partially deactivated to operate only in restricted areas such as pantries and storage areas.

The security equipment is leased to the district by the manufacturer. Representatives from the manufacturer train the district's security personnel to use the equipment, partly with the aid of tape recordings of actual burglaries.

6 **Neill, Shirley Boes.** "Violence and Vandalism: Dimensions and Correctives." *Phi Delta Kappan,* 59, 5 (January 1978), pp. 302-7. EJ 169 837.

Several studies in the last decade have shown that violence and vandalism in the nation's schools are on the rise. Neill here reviews the results of many of these studies and recounts the experiences and advice of numerous educators regarding the prevention of school crime.

Neill suggests that the "explosion" in violence and vandalism in the early 1970s may have been partly a media and statistical creation. School crime "was the most publicized education story in 1975," when a Senate subcommittee investigated the problem. But "now it is not," even though the crime problem is probably worse. Vandalism and violence were growing steadily throughout the mid- and late 1960s, continues Neill, but became "new" when the public discovered the statistics school administrators had preferred to keep as quiet as possible.

One problem common to most school districts is a lack of consistent reporting and recording of school crimes. This could mean, states Neill, that "the right problems may not be identified or the right solutions found." School crime experts suggest that schools can better characterize their crime situations by carefully defining and recording different criminal acts, and by comparing the school's crime statistics with those of the community.

To combat school crime, more and more schools are strengthening their physical security systems by adding alarm systems and guards. Other "softer" approaches being used include modifying counseling services, instructional programs, or organizational structure. For example, disruptive students are often being dealt with in new ways to keep them a part of the school community. In addition, many schools are developing clear definitions of the rights and responsibilities of all members of the educational community.

7 "Protecting Buildings from People." *Progressive Architecture,* 59, 10 (October 1978), pp. 88-95. EJ 188 705.

Criminals usually take advantage of a lack of concern for

security. Unfortunately "security is more often an afterthought" than a priority issue in building design, states this informative article. Featured here are recommendations from security experts and descriptions of security devices ranging from locks to sophisticated alarm systems.

Of course, no building can be totally secure, but a wise choice of simple security measures can reduce the chance of break-in many fold. The goal is to discourage the criminal from attempting to break in in the first place, and then to frustrate any remaining attempts to gain entry.

A considerable portion of this article is devoted to locks: how different types are constructed, how they are commonly defeated, and the weaknesses and strengths of each type. Most locks installed today do not have the characteristics recommended by security experts and can be defeated by a variety of techniques, such as picking, spreading the frame, or wrenching out the lock-cylinder with a vise grip. Even if a lock is good, a weak door or frame or poor installation can allow easy entry.

Also discussed are the use of remote cameras, coded access devices, ultrasonic and photoelectric intrusion detectors, identification systems, guards and guard dogs, and several other security options. Whether a school needs more than sensible design and good locks depends on the security threat to the school and on the balance of risk and cost that the building administrator deems appropriate.

"Criminal intent," states this article, "should be thought of as an environmental force acting on a building." The administrator should assess the extent and nature of that force—in part by "thinking like a thief"—and then specify the changes needed in the building's security system.

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8 **Rubel, Robert J.,** ed. *Identifying Your School's Crime Problems: Simple Steps That Precede Costly Action. An IRC Monograph for Practitioners.* College Park, Maryland: Institute for Reduction of Crime, 1978. 22 pages. ED 180 066.

Accurate information on the nature and extent of a school's crime problem is a necessary prerequisite to the development of an effective school security program. Equally important is the proper and accurate evaluation of an operating security system. In this two-part monograph, Rubel addresses both of these important aspects of security system design.

Part 1 outlines a method for identifying and analyzing school crime problems, while Part 2 discusses "the *preliminary* issues that must be considered" before a security program (or any other program) should begin its evaluation design. Throughout, Rubel purposely presents the material in "a simple and straightforward manner" to facilitate its use by busy practitioners.

In characterizing their schools' security problems, administrators should pay special attention to "critical indicators" of the schools' social atmospheres. Critical indicators are situations that contribute to student fear or frustration, lead to additional misbehavior, and cause a deterioration of the total learning environment. A table lists critical indicators that are either school controlled or student controlled.

The first step in characterizing a school's or a district's security needs is to define carefully what will and what will not be considered a criminal act. A glossary of offense classifications should be drawn up with subcategories indicating gradations of offenses, for example: "fight, no harm; fight, harm; fight, weapon."

In step two, "incident report forms" are filled out for each incident indicating time, place, characteristics of offender, nature of offense, and so forth. The reports are periodically compiled into "incident profiles" from which patterns of incidents can be recognized. These profiles are the administrator's tools for accurately identifying and analyzing the school's problems and formulating plans for crime prevention.

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9 **Sabatino, David A.; Heald, James E.; Rothman, Sharon G.;** and **Miller, Ted L.** "Destructive Norm-Violating School Behavior among Adolescents: A Review of Protective and Preventive Efforts." *Adolescence,* 13, 52 (Winter 1978), pp. 675-86. EJ 202 612.

Adolescents participate in "norm-violating behavior" for a variety of reasons. A review of the literature by the authors isolated several major categories of "contributing motivators."

Crimes may be committed for purely financial gain—often to support a drug dependency—or they may be attempts to strike out symbolically against the impersonal, "rule promulgating" school. Property may be destroyed for excitement or peer acceptance as part of "malicious play." A juvenile may attack other students or the school out of a deep-seated resentment over his own academic failure or because of unfilled emotional needs. Or, a student's criminal behavior may stem from his identity with a gang.

Currently, there are two major approaches to reducing norm-violating behavior among adolescents. The first is technological or architectural in nature and is "designed to protect building structures, contents, and people." Alarm systems, special materials, surveillance cameras, and other technological systems have reduced vandalism in numerous districts, state the authors, but these actions do not treat the cause of adolescent crime.

The second approach is a preventive one and seeks to fill the unsatisfied needs of disturbed adolescents and bring them back into the societal mainstream. One of the major preventive programs identified by the authors is career education, which stresses "vocational training and job skills as a way to modify the youth's opportunity structure and thus intervene in his delinquency." Another program is "curriculum intervention," which seeks to provide acceptable educational alternatives for disruptive juveniles.

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10 **Schnabolk, Charles.** "Alarm Systems Rarely Work in School Buildings." *School Business Affairs,* 45, 10 (October 1979), pp. 12-13, 36. EJ 209 398.

"All security systems false alarm at a rate close to 98%," states Schnabolk, and the school security system is no exception. This high

failure rate can be significantly reduced, however, if school systems are careful in their selection of an alarm system and an alarm system contractor.

The National Council of School Security Administrators (NCSSA) is presently one of the few sources of reliable information on school alarm systems, says Schnabolk. Reviewed here are some of NCSSA's findings on the advantages and pitfalls of certain alarm systems and policies.

One sensible piece of advice is to "never believe all the claims made by alarm salesmen." All claims should be checked by contacting the NCSSA, "which maintains a record and an evaluation of all alarm manufacturers." Also, says Schnabolk, avoid seeking advice from both architectural firms, which "have traditionally neglected the problems of security," and electrical contractors, who specialize in high voltage equipment and who "are completely ignorant of low voltage electronic alarm equipment."

The alarm contractor chosen should have roots in the community and should have an office within thirty miles, because "maintenance is the most critical factor in any alarm system." At least one member of the school maintenance department should be trained in the system's operation, a useful precaution should the alarm company disappear "from the yellow pages and the face of the earth."

Schnabolk recommends the use of a "listen-in" alarm system, in which phone lines are used to transmit noises from the school to a central security office. The security person on duty can then "distinguish between intrusion and a banging pipe" and thus avoid most false alarms.

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11 **Vestermark, Seymour D., Jr.** and **Blauvelt, Peter D.** *Controlling Crime in the School: A Complete Security Handbook for Administrators.* 1978. 354 pages. ED 169 678.

"Controlling crime in the school requires a *program*," state Vestermark and Blauvelt, for "a program enables you to move beyond an essentially passive stance, in which you *react* as the *victim*." Part 1 of this comprehensive guidebook on school security outlines the essential aspects of developing a basic school security program.

The five chapters of part 1 discuss how administrators can develop a system of "critical indicators" of security problems, how a basic security program should be chosen, what personnel are needed for the security system, how "building a self-protective school community" should be the ultimate goal of security development, and why continued planning is essential to a program's success.

In part 2, the authors—both experienced school security experts—provide information and advice on the major security problems facing schools today. The first six chapters of part 2 discuss the prevention of and possible responses to vandalism, bomb threats, drug problems, rumors, threats, and mass disruptions. In the seventh chapter, a school's possible interactions with the police are outlined. Included are a section on "Why Kids 'Hate' Cops" and several tables outlining police and school relationships in a school crisis situation.

In part 3, entitled "Reinforcing the Basic Program," Vestermark and Blauvelt discuss ways to involve students in the school's security program. Particular attention is given to student rights and responsibilities under the law. This excellent guidebook is replete with useful photos, diagrams, tables, and examples that illustrate the authors' points.

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12 **Wolf, Sam.** "Afraid of the Dark?" *Security World,* 14, 9 (September 1977), p. 70. EJ 188 595.

Wolf, the director of security in the San Antonio (Texas) Independent School District, opens this amusing but informative article by asking the reader about the last time he or she was out late at night in an unlighted area. "Were you looking over your shoulder and feeling the hair standing up on your neck?" he asks. Did you "hurry on your way or just hang around without any concern?"

Apparently even potential vandals will hurry on their way in such situations, a fact evidenced by the significant reductions in the district's vandalism costs after Wolf pulled the switch on *all* lights in the district's schools during closing hours. After an initial three-month trial of this idea at twenty-one of the district's most vandalized schools, there was a 31 percent decrease in vandalism costs, a savings of $45,000. In the same period, the district saved $90,000 in utility costs!

The district has been using this program for five years, and the vandalism loss has continued on its lower trend. The district now concentrates its attention on updating its "electronic surveillance systems to be more capable of detecting burglars." The district has also reduced daylight vandalism, using a prevention program called "Save Your Tax $ Campaign," in which neighborhood citizens are encouraged to anonymously report suspicious activities to a 24-hour security center.

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